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THE PERSONALITY OF JESUS AND HIS HISTORICAL RELATION TO CHRISTIANITY.

THE NAZARENE.

PILATE, the Roman judge who condemned Jesus to die on the cross, called him briefly, "Jesus the Nazarene, king of the Jews," and we may regard the statement that Jesus was a Nazarene as historically correct. The disciples of the crucified Christ are also called Nazarenes in the Acts, and St. Paul is called the ring-leader of the Nazarenes.

The name of the town, Nazareth, has nothing to do with the name of the sect, and the word Nazarene is a later corruption of the word Nazaree, being now used to designate members of the sect of the Nazarees in the days of Jesus.

The Nazarene sect presumably owed its origin to the attempt at resuscitating the ancient institution of the Nazarees, the latter being men who devoted their persons to Yahveh, led a simple life, as the fathers of the Israelites had done during their sojourn in the desert, renouncing all the comforts of civilisation and remaining as little touched by culture as possible. Hence, they did not cut their hair, did not drink wine, did not live in houses, made fire after the pre-historic fashion of the sons of the desert, took no heed of the morrow, and gave themselves up unreservedly to Yahveh. The ancient Nazaree was presumably a mere survival of the desert life of by-gone centuries; but he came to be looked upon as the representative of primitive vigor and piety. And a long time after the real Nazaree had died out, the ideal remained with the people; and among extremely pious Jews the practice was established of

making vows to live for a certain time, or for the remainder of their lives, after the Nazaree fashion. Such Nazarees were regarded with great awe by the people, and were deemed to represent the true type of the ancient unpolluted Israelite, national as well as religious. The revival of Nazareeism (alluded to in 1 Maccabees iii. 49), however, is no longer a continuation of pre-historic habits, but their artificial resuscitation, leading to an organised institution in which some of the archæic features were adhered to and others abandoned.

In the time of Christ the Nazarees (now called Nazarenes after the Latin form *Nazarenus*) formed whole congregations, but it seems that only their leaders, and they probably merely for a time, retired into the desert to live there after the fashion of the ancient Nazarees.

According to Josephus there were two ruling parties in Judæa, the Pharisees and the Sadducees, who constituted the aristocracy of the country, and naturally had a pre-eminently religious significance; the mass of the people, however, were as good as excluded from their ranks. By the side of the conservative Pharisees and the Hellenising Sadducees, sects arose, apparently of foreign growth, the members of which called themselves Ebionites or the Poor, Zabians, or Baptisers, and Essenes, a name of unknown significance. The ascetic tendencies of the latter are un-Jewish; their reverence for the light and the sun point to Parseeism; their condemnation of the oath and of slavery reminds one of Neo-Pythagorism, and yet they are older than the Neo-Pythagorean school, for we have evidences of their existence in the second century before Christ. Thus they may be regarded as an independent but parallel development of the tendencies which prevailed in the whole Roman Empire and produced such philosophies as Neo-Pythagorism and Neo-Platonism. The underlying theory in both Alexandrianism and Essenism appears to be an endeavor to get rid of all that is material and to come into close contact with God who is conceived as pure spirit.

The Nazarenes recruited themselves mainly from the lower walks of life, which is the reason that they are always found in

close affiliation with the sects. Wherever they lived in cities their main distinction seems to have been their adhesion to a socialistic communism, which in the Nazarene congregation in the days following the crucifixion of Christ was deemed so essential as to render the secret retention of any property the blackest crime, worthy of being punished by God with sudden death.

Eusebius quotes the authority of Hegesippus (*Eccles. History* II., 23, 3) that James, the brother of Christ, was a Nazarene for life. Jesus himself, though called a Nazarene and though the congregation of his disciples bear the same name after his death, was apparently not a strict observer of the Nazarene vows, for his enemies, presumably members of his own sect, called him a glutton and a wine-bibber. He lived in the desert for a while and may have taken the vows only for a time, but we know positively that he stood in a definite relation to the sect of Baptisers, or Zabians, with whom the Nazarenes frequently seem to have been associated.

We know that in the days of the early Christians there was a marked difference between the Gentile church of St. Paul and the Jewish congregation of Nazarenes led by St. Peter and James, the brother of Jesus; and the question presents itself: Which was the Christianity of Jesus? Was Jesus a Jew-Christian like the Nazarenes of Jerusalem, or a Gentile Christian like St. Paul? The accepted view, we may say at once, is that Jesus lived like the Nazarenes in perfect obedience to the law of Moses, presumably with the sole exception of keeping aloof (after the fashion of the Essenes) from the bloody sacrifices of the temple and cultivating the peculiar traditions of the Nazarenes, such as accepting baptism, breaking bread in communion, abstaining from taking an oath, living in voluntary poverty without private property, etc.; but while Jesus remained faithful to the laws and customs of his country, he is assumed to have cherished the Pauline view of a fulfilment of the law in the establishment of a cosmopolitan fraternity—the church, which should realise the ideal of peace upon earth among the men of good will.

We are apt to interpret the life of Jesus in the spirit in which the Church conceives the Christ-ideal, and thus our theologians ex-

plain the traditions recorded in the Gospels in the light of the dogmas of the Catholic Church as it existed in the beginning of the Christian era ; but it is obvious that a historical investigation cannot accept this method, but must endeavor to understand the character and belief of Jesus as he really was, not as the Church wanted him to be.

THE HISTORICAL SOURCES.

The sources of our knowledge of Jesus are limited to the four Gospels ; otherwise we have no reliable information whatever. There are a few scraps of unwritten sayings of Christ, the so-called *Agrapha*, which were quoted by Christian authors of the early Church from oral tradition, but they are doubtful and gain importance only indirectly as confirming or throwing light on, passages of the Gospels. In addition there are some passages in Flavius Josephus's writings on Christ, but they are interpolations which did not make their appearance before the ninth century. Jesus may in one respect rightly be regarded as a figure that is unknown to history. This is the view of a historian who has made a specialty of the history of the Old Testament and who at the same time is a good Christian. Professor Cornill says in his *History of the People of Israel*, speaking of the period of the life-time of Jesus:

"I assume that my esteemed readers are already aware of the fact that Abbot Dionysius Exiguus, who in the sixth century calculated the Christian era according to which we still universally reckon time, erred in the establishment of the year of Christ's birth, placing it several years, probably five, if not seven, too late. It is positively certain that Herod died in the year 4 before our era ; if, therefore, Jesus was born during his reign—and there is no reason for doubting this tradition—the conclusion is unavoidable that the date commonly assigned for the birth of Christ is wrong. The place of Jesus's birth is just as much a matter of uncertainty as the time ; and so is the year of his death,—in this latter point reports and estimates vary a matter of seven years, from 29 to 36 A. D.

"It is downright providential that we know so little from the historical and biographical point of view concerning this greatest life that was ever lived on earth. Thus every possibility is to be precluded of our falling into the delusion that we know him in knowing the date of his birth and of his death and the outward circumstances of his life ; he is to stand before us simply in his work.

"The life and activity of Jesus fell into the period of Jewish history which is

to occupy our attention in this chapter, and his activity was possible only on the soil of Israel and among the Jewish people; but yet a history of the people of Israel is not the place in which to speak of him. He swept across the hopelessly darkened sky of Israel like a meteor, flashing and vanishing; he had no effect upon the history of the Jewish people, and the fact that he did not do this, that he deliberately refused to do so, became, humanly speaking, his doom. His people and his time demanded a Messiah with the sword of Gideon, one who would break the dominion of Rome and re-establish the ardently longed-for kingdom of Israel. Jesus regarded it as his mission to break the power of sin and to establish the Kingdom of God, which is not accomplished with the sword of outward power but through the inward regeneration of the spirit. In the invincible faith that this Kingdom of God would and must come, Jesus went to his death. But on his way to death he had for his people only this affecting farewell: 'Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.' " (Luke xxiii. 28.)

Although Jesus left no direct impression on the national history of his people, he is after all an historical figure and that of the highest importance, by the indirect influence which he exercised upon the world; and had he done nothing else than to impart to Stephen the joyousness of dying a martyr's death and thus indirectly to stir the soul of Paul, who witnessed the scene, and to cause him to break down on the way to Damascus under the long suppressed accusations of his conscience, it would have been sufficient to render his life and death of the highest historical significance. But we must approach the problem not from the standpoint of a believer but of a doubter or even of an unbeliever, and it seems to me that in spite of all the unhistorical elements in the Gospels we cannot help coming to the conclusion that the main facts narrated therein, leaving aside all later accretions, possess all the symptoms of probability, on external as well as internal evidences.

The Gospels contain many narratives which, if told of Zaratrustra, or Mohammed, or Buddha, would be deemed incredible by any sober-minded Christian; but for that reason Jesus need not have been a mere invention of his followers.

The Gospel accounts, as they stand now, are on their own authority not older than the post-apostolic period, which begins with the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70. St. Paul makes no mention of them; Hermas appears to be acquainted with such ac-

counts as are contained in Mark. Papias, born not before 60 and not later than 90 A. D. (of whom we know much through Eusebius), refers to documents which contained the words of Jesus and which may have been the often quoted speeches (*λόγια*) of the Lord. According to Justinus Martyr, who died between 163 and 167 (*Apolo-gia*, I., 67), the reminiscences (*ἀπομνημονεύματα*) of the apostles were read on Sunday in the Christian congregations together with passages from the prophets, while Christ as a matter of course was referred to as the highest authority. These early books did not possess any authority of their own on account of their apostolic authorship; they were not believed to be inspired by the Holy Ghost, and the canon of the early thinkers was still limited to the Old Testament. Any one felt at liberty to alter the text according to his notions of the truth. They were not as yet deemed canonical. Thus Justinus Martyr, when relating the story of his own conversion in his dialogue with Trypho, tells us how a venerable old Jew-Christian had convinced him of the truth by quoting scriptures, which, however, are passages from the Prophets, not from those writings which formed the first germ of the New Testament literature. According to Justin's idea, the Prophets contain all that is necessary to be known about Christ, and he recognises no other authority except the revelation of St. John which is regarded as a continuation of prophecy and is adduced to prove the doctrine of a millennium upon earth. Other quotations of the speeches of the Lord are made by Polycarp (7, 1), Irenæus (I., Preface), and Ptolomæus (*Epiph. Haer.* 33, 3), who in quoting authority speaks of "the law, the prophets, and the Lord" (*ὁ νόμος, καὶ οἱ προφῆται, καὶ ὁ κύριος*). Whatever may have been the date of the origin of the Gospels which we possess now, this much is sure, that Mark has, in the furnace of the most rigorous critique, been proved to be the most historical and original of them. In Matthew, Luke, and John, a dogmatic programme dominates the narration. Mark alone is a pure historian, and the picture of his Jesus is, with all its legendary ornamentation, quite realistic. Matthew represents the Judaistic Christianity, Luke the Pauline party of Gentile Christianity, and John the Christianised Neo-Platonic Gnosis of Philo.

The solution of the Gospel problem is the combined work of several theological schools, and the result of the labor of several generations has been condensed by H. J. Holtzmann, Doctor of Theology and Professor of New Testament exegesis at the University of Strassburg. We quote from the *Hand-Commentar zum Neuen Testament*, Vol. I., p. 7, the following *résumé*, which gives a concise outline of the situation. Holtzmann says:¹

"While Matthew and Luke in sketching their hero fit him into the frame of his Messianic mission and work, as previously conceived; and while accordingly in both Gospels we meet with a dogmatic programme that is superadded to descriptions of a series of events in the life of Jesus, all such suggestions are missing in Mark. The mysterious prelude of the birth-history, the elaboration of which the apostolic age left to the following generation, is entirely missing. The hero of the Gospel story is simply introduced as Jesus of Nazareth, thus called in contradistinction to many other bearers of the same name, for from the time of Herod the Great until the destruction of Jerusalem mention is made of eleven other persons who were called Jesus,—priests, leaders of factions, robbers, and farmers. This Jesus of Nazareth (Mark i. 9) appears to have grown out of the natural conditions of the soil of Galilee. His mother, brothers, and sisters are all well known (Mark vi. 3); his father, Joseph, alone is not mentioned, probably on account of his early death, from which we also must explain the fact that in the early history of Christianity he is crowded into the background. In his place Jesus is himself considered as the carpenter, who, however, at the beginning of our account (chap. i. 9) repairs to the Jordan where at once, when John the Baptist was put in prison, instead of continuing his former occupation, he follows the vocation of a public teacher. The theme of his public proclamations which now begin shows a progress which is demonstrable in the description of Mark. The first sermon of Jesus (Mark i. 15) which is repeated by his disciples, vi. 12, was the same as that of the Baptist who partakes of the same prophetic character as Jesus, for both announce that the portentous time is near at hand in which the empires of this world shall give way to the establishment of the Kingdom of God. Jesus wants to bring home to the hearts of men that this message conveys an earnest exhortation to all, and that it should impress with joy the children of God. Accordingly, while in Matthew the very first proclamation of Jesus (the Sermon on the Mount) announces the personality of the new legislator in his full importance, the preaching of Jesus in Mark centers not so much in his personality as in his work. Jesus speaks alone of the moral conditions, deemed necessary for entering his congregation and joining the Kingdom of God. He does not begin by proclaiming himself as the master and king of

¹ Translated from the German.

the Kingdom of God, but by exhorting the people to found the Kingdom of God by their own exertions and labor, and to prove himself its first and most perfect citizen.

"From the fulness of his conviction concerning the magnitude of the work which is to be accomplished, the power of self-consciousness grows more and more in Jesus, who knows himself and himself alone to be entrusted with this mission. Here the intermediate phase between the first and the second form of Jesus's sermon is the time when the original call, 'The Kingdom of God is near at hand,' changes into the idea that is presupposed in the chapter containing the parables, the signification of which is, 'the Kingdom is here.' If the Kingdom is here, its founder and master must be here also; the circle being drawn, its center is given too, and Jesus's development finds its consummation in his Messianic kingly self-consciousness expressed in the words, 'I am,' in Chap. xiv. 62, which seals his fate. Jesus's proclamation could not from the beginning have a Messianic tendency, and the Second Gospel actually shows a slow but steady progress which finally leads to the unfurling of the Messianic banner. Here the disciples are by no means the first to recognise in Jesus the Son of God, that is, the Messiah. This event is attributed first to the demons (Mark i. 24, 35; v. 7) upon whom the presence of Jesus makes an extraordinary impression. They are commanded to be quiet. Also when they proclaimed him in the presence of a great multitude as the Messiah (Mark iii. 11-12), the same motive is apparent on various occasions in the repeated requests of Jesus not to speak publicly of his deeds.

"Now there are several passages in the Second Gospel which possess parallels in the First. There is Mark v. 43; vii. 36; viii. 26=Matthew ix. 26, 30, 33. Twice in Matthew the command not to speak publicly of Jesus as the Messiah is omitted. The command no longer has sense in Matthew, for here Jesus appears as Messiah from the beginning of his career, and is proclaimed as such by the voice at his baptism: 'This is my son'; while the other two evangelists read 'Thou art,' which is originally an inner voice addressed to and heard by Jesus alone. These omissions alone indicate the dependence of Matthew on Mark. Still more, however, this appears in the fact that Matthew allows the command of Jesus to stand in the third case (Mark viii. 26=Matthew ix. 30), where he is not conscious of the necessity of omitting it in order to be consistent with his change of presentation.

"The same becomes more obvious still in Matthew viii. 4, where Matthew leaves the command of Jesus that appears in Mark i. 44, without considering that since, according to the described scenery as given in Matthew viii. 1, the multitudes who have just listened to the sermons on the Mount are still present, this command has become preposterous.

"According to Mark i. 43, Jesus had called the leper into the house and spoken with him privately. Still more obvious it becomes when shortly before the selection of the apostles, Mark (iii. 10-12) makes the remark that Jesus healed many and always forbade the demons to promulgate his Sonship of God and his Mes-

sianic mission. This is in Matthew (xii. 15-16) abbreviated thus: 'That great multitudes followed him and he healed them all and charged them that they should not make him known.' Here, accordingly, Matthew has retained one sentence of his original, but in the interest of an abbreviation gave it an incorrect interpretation, in consequence of which his report becomes actually unintelligible.

"Further, even the exceptions which Jesus makes in his command not to speak of his Messianic work and dignity are to the purpose in Mark. The man of Gadarene is the first person who is allowed to speak of his being healed by Jesus in his Pagan home (Mark v. 1, 19-20). Moreover, Jesus's habit of keeping his activity secret could not be continued for any length of time, because he repeatedly healed in the presence of witnesses. Thus we find the omission of the command in Chapters ii. 11-12; iii. 5; v. 34; vi. 56; ix. 27; x. 52. In this way Jesus began to be known and people commenced to think seriously about him and his work, while before they had remained without an explanation as to the manner of his mission. (Mark i. 27; iv. 41; vi. 2-3.) Some misrepresent him maliciously (iii. 21-22). Others regard him as a genuine prophet (vi. 14-15; viii. 28). Jesus himself, however, went so far as to indicate his Messianity in the mysterious expression 'Son of Man,' which latter, however, in the passages Mark ii. 10, 28, may have slipped in by anticipation. If they are mere anticipations, Jesus never called himself the 'Son of Man' in the full Messianic sense of the term before the great moment mentioned in Mark viii. 31, but afterwards did so always. Even the disciples sent out by him (Mark vi. 7, 12-13) were not requested to announce him as the Messiah, but only to proclaim the Kingdom of God, to exhort the people to repentance, and to heal the sick. At last the comprehension of the significance of Jesus is matured in Peter when he says 'Thou art the Christ' (viii. 29) and this Jesus had not as yet been for any one of the parties of the people, as can be gathered from the other answers mentioned in viii. 28. Here the development of Jesus reaches the climax of his Messianic self-consciousness when he answers St. Peter affirmatively, saying 'I am.'

"But even now the disciples are not according to Mark allowed to make known to the people their master's Messianic dignity (viii. 30) and celestial glory (ix. 9). Jesus alone speaks more freely and openly to the people (viii. 32) while he instructs his disciples that the 'Son of Man' must suffer many things, an idea which he had only touched upon formerly (ii. 20). He now discusses it at length (viii 31, 33, 34; ix. 9, 13, 31; x. 32-34, 38, 39, 45), but the secret can no longer remain a secret. The cause of Jesus is ripe for decision. Returning from the extremest North, whither his conflicts with the Pharisees had pushed him, he quickly wanders through Galilee, and reaching Jericho is at once greeted as Messiah (x. 46-48) Now he drops all considerations.

"This, in fact, is a well-arranged and consistent presentation of the nucleus of the story of the Gospel, which is obliterated in Matthew by relating incidents in which Jesus is recognised as Messiah, now by the blind and the sick is greeted as

the Son of David (ix. 27; xv. 22; compare xii. 23), and now is directly called the 'Son of God' by the disciples themselves (xiv. 23). While, however, Jesus according to Mark commands the demons to keep silence concerning his Messianity, according to Matthew (vii. 29) he does not repeal this unwelcome testimony, but on the contrary appears in the very beginning, when preaching the sermons on the Mount (vi. 21-23), as the master and judge (see also x. 22-23; xi. 25-27). If in this way the disciples had recognised Jesus as the Son of God, there was no special divine revelation necessary in order to open the eyes of Peter (Matt. xvi. 17) and he at least should not have been the first to have made such a discovery. Peter's words, accordingly, are in the right place only in Mark viii. 29, and Luke ix. 20.

Nor is it probable that Jesus for any length of time should have appeared before the people as a declared Messiah. The Roman police who always had a keen eye for Messianic movements, and without much inquiry into their nature and motive, exterminated them, would not long have suffered in Judæa a man who, calling himself the Son of David and King of Israel, received the homage of a great part of the people, even though the latter might for his own person have been thoroughly convinced of the non-political and purely religious character of his mission. That Jesus should for years have journeyed about and preached as Messiah can only be accepted by those who believe without feeling the need of a scientific comprehension and an historical orientation."

Dr. E. A. Abbott (in the *Encycl. Brit.*, s. v. *Gospels*) presents in a very striking form the argument of theological scholarship in favor of the so-called Mark hypothesis. He shows that the character of the older account (which may fitly be called the older Mark) can still be ascertained when we take a copy of our Mark and strike out all the words not contained in Matthew and Luke. What remains is a fairly well connected account which may be regarded as the oldest historical record of the life of Jesus.¹

Dr. Abbott condenses the result briefly thus :

"To sum up the contents of the common tradition, it omits the genealogies miraculous incarnation, and the picturesque details of the infancy; it lays emphasis on the relations between John the Baptist and Jesus; it contains none of the parables except the sower, the mustard seed, and the wicked husbandman, and few of the long discourses of Jesus, except an abridged prediction of the second coming. The disputes between Jesus and the Pharisees about the Sabbath, about fasting, about exorcism, about the baptism of John, and the tribute, and Christ the Son of David, and the dialogue with the Sadducees about the resurrection, are very fully given; and so also is the dialogue with the rich young man. Indeed it is a collec-

¹ For details see *Encycl. Brit.*, Vol. X., p. 793 et seq.

tion of dialogues and anecdotes rather than a set treatise of doctrine or biography. The sayings of Jesus recorded in it are short, pithy and abrupt,¹ and many of them are polemical. Only now and then do we find a sentence which goes down deep below all polemics, and reveals a deep-laid spiritual plan. But putting such sentences together we perceive that the Triple Tradition describes a prophet wholly different from any that had before appeared in Israel; a prophet who not only (like Isaiah) protested against sabbaths and purifications as ends in themselves, but who also preached the Fatherhood of God in a manner entirely peculiar to Himself, and who set aside the Mosaic law of divorce (Mark x. 2-11). He also instructed His disciples to enter into the kingdom as little children (x. 15), and seems to have attached a certain symbolic mystery to childhood as representing Himself (ix. 37). He taught His disciples further to devote their lives to Him, and to ignore all life apart from Him (viii. 34), ('to confess Christ, to deny themselves'). From the first He claims the power of forgiving sins (ii. 7); and, as soon as one of His disciples confessed Him to be the Messiah, He prepared for death, predicting that He should die, but rise again. Then, after prophesying the fall of the temple, and great distress in all nations, He predicted a final triumph for His disciples; and after bequeathing Himself, His body and His blood, as at a funeral feast,² as His final legacy to His disciples, He was arrested and put to death."

The original source of the synoptic Gospels possesses the peculiarity of unmistakably exhibiting traces of oral tradition. We may assume that there have been told in the circle of his followers sayings of the Lord which were deemed as the highest authority in matters of belief. St. Paul knows of such words and quotes them. Professor Holtzmann says (pp. 15-16):

"We see in this point clearly into the formation of tradition. In the 'words of the Lord,' which were carefully treasured, the congregation possessed a kind of fundamental law, a highest authority, and a final appeal. Memorable speeches of Jesus were the first things which were propagated; dicta of proverb-like conciseness, of striking expression, of popular clearness, such as are presented like pearls on a string in the Sermon on the Mount: 'Blessed are the pure in heart'; 'You are the salt of the earth'; 'Your speech be yea, yea; nay, nay!' Any one who has heard sentences like these, if only once, will remember them forever. To the same category belong also the perspicuous crystal-like parables that are contained in the Gospels in great numbers. They are inexhaustible mines of the purest notions of God and world, inimitable in their simplicity as well as artless dignity of con-

¹ Cf. Justin, *Apol. I.* (Kirchhofer, p. 89), βραχεῖς τε καὶ σύντομοι παρ αὐτοῦ λόγοι γεγόνασι.

² That the institution of the Lord's Supper must be given up as unhistorical has been set forth in *The Monist*, Vol. X., No. 3, pp. 375-376.

ception, and full of an inspiration which forever secures them a position at the head of all the memorials that mark the path of mankind's ascent towards its divine goal. Nor must we overlook, although here tradition begins to become uncertain, those grand prophecies which gave wings to the imagination of the first congregation and engaged the attention of all subsequent ages. They are suggestions uttered from time to time by Jesus, and collected in his farewell addresses to his congregation; they rose from his presentiment of approaching catastrophes both in the world at large and in his own life, and from the confidence that his work would survive death and the grave."

In order to gain a correct idea of the personality of the historical Jesus, we must limit our attention to those of his sentences in the Gospels which still show the marks of an originally oral tradition. They may be supposed to be genuine sayings of Christ which were collected in the Speeches of the Lord and the Reminiscences of the Apostles. Holtzmann says (p. 15):

"The manner in which these 'Words of the Lord' were preserved indicates plainly the method of oral tradition. Sometimes the similarity of the contents conditions their connexion, as for instance, in both sentences on the Sabbath (Mark ii. 23-26 = Matt. i. 40 = Luke vi. 1-11). Sometimes the mere similarity of the sound of the words suffices to connect them. Or even only a haphazard relation which the ideas preserve in the memory determines the succession of sentences. Only through the simile of the shining light is Luke xi. 33, the exhortation of making the right use of our talents for the benefit of others (in Luke xi. 34-36), connected with the sentence saying that it is important for the whole life of a man that the determinative center of his being should be full of light. In the same way the idea of making light and lighting up the darkness connects the sentences of Luke viii. 16, in which Jesus speaks of lighting a candle and setting it on a candle-stick forms the connexion with Luke viii. 17, in which the general use of light in darkness is mentioned, stating that 'anything hid shall be known and go abroad.' Oral tradition alone arranges thoughts after such view points and external motives, and it is this method that was apparently employed when the materials of the Gospels were first written down."

These sentences, accordingly, contain that which for technical reasons may be regarded as the best accredited of the sayings of Jesus and they allow us to form a fair idea of his extraordinary personality. The main argument that can be offered for the genuineness of a great part of the Gospels, is, it seems to me, the Nazarene world-conception reflected in many sayings of Jesus. They

are retained in spite of being contradictory to the main tenets of the Gentile Church ; and these sayings must, with greatest plausibility, be considered as genuine because they would not have been invented, and being recorded in unquestionably genuine traditions were only tolerated. In addition, the eschatological belief of Jesus is expressed in a prophecy which is very definite and had at an early date passed beyond all hope of fulfilment. Jesus says :

"Verily I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power."¹

This passage is positive evidence of the fact that some portions of the Gospels date back to the generation that lived in the days of Jesus and were still expecting to see the day of the Lord. It is a belief which St. Paul cherished as a direct revelation of the Lord and which constituted the main tenet of early Christianity.

Whatever may be said in favor of the theories which regard the Gospels as products of a myth-making (*Mythenbildung*, as it has been called) belonging to a later age, we cannot help reverting to the old conception for the reason that later myth-writers would have written a Gospel that taught the peculiar doctrines of Gentile Christianity and would never have invented sayings of Christ contrary to their own beliefs. The very remarks of the writers with which they accompany their reports, being touches that are intended to palliate and soften the harshness of the tradition, are still further evidences of the genuineness of the source from which the information comes.

The subject is of sufficient importance to enter into details.

CHARACTERISTIC POINTS IN THE RELIGION OF JESUS.

Jesus, like all Nazarenes, believed in communism as the highest social order. When asked, "What good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" he said :

"Keep the commandments," and, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give it to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven."

¹ The prophecy is repeated by Matthew xvi. 28, and Luke ix. 27.

When the man who asked this question went away sorrowful, St. Matthew continues (Matt. xix. 23-24):

"Then Jesus said unto his disciples, 'Verily, I say unto you that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

"And again I say unto you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.'"

Whatever interpretation may be given to this passage, we perceive clearly that Jesus himself and his disciples acted accordingly. The main condition of discipleship as of membership in the early church of Jerusalem consisted in the surrender of all worldly possessions.

The Ebionites (the sect of "the Poor") looked upon wealth as an evil and poverty as a blessing, and we learn from the story of Dives that Jesus represents the other world not as a punishment for evil-doing and a reward of the good, but merely as an inversion of the present condition of things. Abraham explains to Dives in Hell the doctrine of the life to come as follows:

"Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented."

Other writings of the New Testament contain passages of the same purport. We read in the Epistle of St. James (v. 1-3):

"Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.

"Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.

"Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasures together for the last days."

The current interpretation changes the significance of the words that "one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law," into its contrary, that the letter of the law shall pass away and its spirit only be fulfilled.¹ Jesus incidentally called the Gen-

¹ The difficulty of this passage is not overcome by explaining it in the light of St. Paul's theory that "Christ is the fulfilment of the law" (*τέλος γὰρ νόμον χριστός*, Rom. x. 4); for it is Christ himself who here insists, not on the preservation of the letter of the law only, but even of every jot and tittle, viz., the very iota and stroke

tiles "dogs" (Mark vii. 27), the usual name which the Jews gave them, and he stated expressly that he was "not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. xv. 24.) Jesus helps the Gentile woman, but merely on account of her extraordinary faith, not in anticipation of the great scope which after his crucifixion his saving power is intended to acquire. There is not the slightest allusion to such a prospect in any one of the sayings of Jesus that can lay unequivocal claim to genuineness.

Jesus sends out the twelve Apostles to the lost sheep of the house of Israel and believes that the coming of the Son of Man (which is identical with the expected regeneration of the world) is so near at hand that they shall scarcely have time to finish their missionary trip through the cities of that little country. He says (Matt. x. 5, 6, 23):

"Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

"But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

"Verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the son of man be come."

This cannot mean the first coming of the Son of Man in Jesus, for Jesus is present and gives the command himself.

One significant feature of the new world-order was the spirituality of man, which was attained by a conquest of the sensual nature. Chastity was no less a condition of attaining life eternal than poverty; and thus Jesus enjoins strict celibacy, saying (Luke xx. 34-35):

"The children of this world marry and are given in marriage; but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage."

of it, and this shall be "till heaven and earth pass." The same doctrine of the eternity of the law is pronounced by Jews. The limitation, "till all be fulfilled," appears like a modification of the "verily" which is added to conceal the contradiction in which this sentence stands to the text of the Sermon on the Mount, usually interpreted. If we understand the words to mean what they say, Jesus would have his followers keep the Mosaic law punctiliously in its letter as well as in its spirit. Accordingly he would reject the Pauline doctrine of freedom and insist on circumcision as indispensable.

Jesus speaks approvingly of destroying the cause of sexuality, saying (Matt. xix. 12):

"For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb; and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men; and there be eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it let him receive it."

We do not say that the passage was actually understood in its literal sense, but this much is sure that the mere idea of resorting to such allegories is an unmistakable evidence of moral views which are only in part preserved by the Roman Catholic Church and have been abandoned for good by the Protestants.

The mere idea of an eunuch is an abomination, not only to the Gentiles, but also to the Jews, so much so that even he who accidentally lost his manhood was according to Old Testament law forbidden to enter into the congregation of the Lord (see Deut. xxiii. 1). Nevertheless, the ideal of absolute chastity was carried so far among the early Christians that so prominent a man as Origen deemed it necessary to become an eunuch for the kingdom of heaven's sake.

Jesus apparently was a Jew in his religion, sharing with his contemporaries the national narrowness, but he had imbibed the spirit of the age which otherwise manifested itself in the religious fermentation of the Gnostic movement that preceded Christianity and made level the paths of the new religion that was destined to conquer the world. His education was probably limited, which may have been the reason why he did not shrink from using the most violent names, such as "ye serpents, ye generation of vipers," and it is not improbable that he shared with his compatriots, the inhabitants of Galilee, the belief in demons as well as the method of curing diseases by exorcism. He was baptised by St. John, the leader of the Zabian sect. Being a Nazarene, he may also have kept in touch with the Essenes and Ebionites. As a preacher and a prophet he was respected among the people so much that at Jerusalem enthusiasts (probably of the Nazarene settlement there) greeted him on his arrival with shouts of hosanna.

JESUS, THE MAN, AND HIS METHOD OF TEACHING.

The question has been asked, how did Jesus earn his living, and we know that for a time at least he continued his father's trade as a carpenter; but it seems that, after having chosen the religious calling of preacher and healer, he lived on the voluntary gifts of those believers who entertained him in their houses or called upon his assistance for curing their sick. Judging from the injunction given to his disciples, he accepted the hospitality of his followers, but no money, not silver and not gold; but according to the Gospel of St. John, he kept a common purse with his disciples, and Judas Iscariot acted as treasurer.

But all these things are the externalities only of Jesus; they do not constitute the core of his being, his personality, and would be insufficient to explain the prominent part he played in history. Jesus was a man of the people, with a heart for the people, and an unusual oratorical power over the people.

Jesus was a devout man, but not a theologian. His religion is not the product of school doctrines. He who would try to explain his appearance as a combination of the conflicting theologies of his time will miss the most characteristic feature of his life. Jesus apparently nourished his soul at a well of living waters and did not draw his inspiration from books. Thus nature is mirrored in crystal-clear reflexion in his speeches. His imagination does not suffer from Oriental exaggeration. His mind is not distorted by Rabbinical wit or subtleties, and there can be no question that he is a child of Galilee, of the country which is described as a continuous garden where palms and figs and flowers grow. If he had grown up in a city like Jerusalem he would not have introduced similes and invented parables of provincial life as he did. His native country is the background of all his speeches, and only a Galileean could expect to find figs at Easter-time in Jerusalem. There is nothing gloomy in his views of nature. He speaks of God's sun and its radiance, of the birds under the sky, and the flowers in the

fields, of the rain that pours down on the just and the unjust. Any one who uses such language is not in danger of having the theologian stifling the man in him.¹

The life of nature apparently made a deep impression upon Jesus, but he concentrated his attention even more upon the life of man; and here again we find the social conditions of Galilee, not the city-life of Jerusalem, nor views which might be uttered in the schoolroom. Jesus was familiar with the joys and sufferings of the country and the people, and thus he was enabled to voice the deepest religious sentiments. God was to him like the father of a family, and there are many pictures of family life in his parables. He speaks of the children sitting round the table with their parents, the dogs waiting for the crumbs that are thrown down to them, and when it is dark, of the light that is put on a candlestick, which gives light to all that are in the house. Neighbors and friends are mentioned who are invited on festive occasions (Luke xv. 69). The children sleep in the chamber together with their father (Luke xi. 7); and children are mentioned as being nearest and dearest to his heart.

By the side of these friendly pictures of family life Jesus also mentions the oppressive social conditions of the laborers, servants, or slaves, and of the hired workmen in the vineyards. He frequently mentions the good man of the house who is the head slave, the overseer of the other servants, either proving himself to be reliable or being a tyrant oppressing his companions. The slave girls are alluded to who work the hand-mill and who must sleep two in a bed. All of them are subject to the cruel laws of the times and depend upon the will of their master. When they have tired themselves in the fields, they are still kept busy in the house (Luke xvii. 7-9). They serve at table, and it is a distinction if they are entrusted by their master with money affairs. Jesus repeatedly introduces the master of the house in his attitude of going over their accounts and computing the returns of the entrusted money. When

¹ In this character sketch of Jesus the author follows the authority of Holtzmann.

the master travels, the servants wait for his return and remain awake into the night.

But the hardships of slavery, which are introduced without further reflexion in the sermons of Jesus, are not the worst features of the social conditions of those days. The greatest misery is represented in the cripples and the beggars on the streets, the tramps on the highroads, the thieves in the cities, the robbers in the woods, the malefactors who carry their own cross, imprisoned debtors, etc. We learn of the transactions of usury, bills of indebtedness, the severity of creditors, the contentions between parties on the way to the judge, punishments by the court, etc., etc.

Yet while Jesus describes scenes from life such as he must have witnessed in his childhood and early youth, he was at the same time not unfamiliar with the Scriptures. His speeches show a special familiarity with Deutero-Isaiah and also several of the Apocryphal and Apocalyptic writings. In Luke xi. 49 he quotes from a Book of Wisdom which is no longer extant, and there are passages in Matthew and Luke which contain echoes of Jesus Sirach.

Jesus must have learned reading and writing, for we are informed that he read chapters from the Prophets in the synagogue and addressed the Pharisees repeatedly with the words: "Have you not read?" He quotes from the history of his people and is full of Biblical reminiscences. It is true that he makes mistakes in his exegesis, but he proves himself a genuine prophet by the freedom with which he introduces his interpretations. The Scriptures are to him only incidental and accessory corroborations of the religious experiences which he had had himself, and thus he shows an assurance and superiority, which, although he never places himself above the Scriptures, makes it possible for him to speak with authority. The Scriptures are to him like a glass in which he sees his own face and behind it the face of God.

The influence of Essenism on Jesus has been a matter of dispute. His condemnation of the oath, his celibacy, and the communism involved in the idea of the surrender of property, the redundancy of temple service and bloody sacrifices, indicate some

connexion between Jesus and Essenism ; but Holtzmann is inclined to regard these coincidences as being due to the moral ideals of the times, for Jesus was very different from the Essenes, since he did not place his light under a bushel as they did in their retirement. They represented a separatistic sect, while he lived in the world and communicated with all the people, scribes and Pharisees, publicans and sinners.

The Pharisees were apparently the party with which Jesus was most closely connected in the beginning of his career. He appears as a guest in the synagogues. He knows their methods of teaching, he uses their modes of argument and proves his case on the authority of Scriptures, in exactly the same style which they were wont to use. He discusses problems such as that proposed to Hillel, Which is the first and the greatest commandment? (Mark xii. 28 ; Matt. xxii. 36.) He introduces the term "righteousness" as frequently as did the Pharisees, only that he deepened the meaning of the word. It is still the dominant theme in the Sermon on the Mount. Where he combats the Pharisees, he does so with their own weapons. He discusses the worth of almsgiving and the reward in heaven. He agrees with the Pharisees on the doctrine of resurrection as against the Sadducees, and it is not mere chance that Paul the great apostle who completed the mission of Jesus came also from the school of the Pharisees.

But the main difference between Jesus and the Pharisees is his more natural and more human conception of the righteousness of the law. In his explanation of the law, his own genius asserts itself. Imbued with the experiences of real life he applies his religious views to the conditions that surround him, and is free from all scholasticism and scholarly prejudices. He is not a professional scribe but a self-taught man who bears the prototype of his religious ideas in himself, and this gives him a self-reliance which cannot be acquired by book-learning. His belief in God is not born in the storms of despair, but it appears like sunshine upon the quiet sea of Galilee.

Considering the character of Jesus, such as is here described, it is natural that he possesses no special method of teaching. He

does not use the abstract definitions of the schools. He shows no doctrinary reflexion, nor any dogmatic system. He is a man of the people and not, like St. Paul and St. John, a theologian. He never cares to solve problems of science. He even neglects the order and consistency of his thoughts. He is always bent on solving practical questions which he does by his faith in a world of religious sentiment. He never strives for lucidity, but always for a popularly impressive expression of his thoughts which are communicated as directly as possible. We must understand every single word from the motives which prompt it, and in order to judge of his personality we ought first to be able to translate his speeches back into Aramaic, for they have suffered greatly by being transcribed into a Greek garment. This is a work which has only recently been begun, but has not as yet been completed.

The originality of Jesus appears mainly in his application of religion to practical life. As his views of nature and of man are taken directly from life, so he applies them directly to the needs which he sees about them. He is more a child of nature than the theologians of later centuries would have it.

While Jesus has a deep reverence for the sacred traditions of his nation, and while he is willing to fulfil the law, he sees no need of obeying all the various ordinances which the Pharisees and scribes enjoin on the people. The law as it was understood in Jesus's time was a heavy burden upon the people. It presupposed a study, for who could know all the rules about prayer, about washings, about the tithes, sacrifices, and ceremonials? The law of the Jews had become a religion for the rich. It was utterly impracticable for poor people. The parents of Jesus themselves were unable to comply with all the demands of the law, for we know that they travelled only once to Jerusalem, a journey which, according to the law, had to be made three times a year by a good Jew. We have the express statement that Jesus himself did not observe the fasts and that he did not hesitate to break the Sabbath. The mass of the people lived in utter ignorance of the details of the law, and considering the burden of the law, we can now appreciate that Jesus praises the unlearned and uneducated by saying "Blessed

are the poor in spirit." He comes with a Gospel for the poor. He addresses not the pious Jews, but the sinners, those who by the pressure of circumstances no longer continued to observe the law and formed a class by themselves upon whom the orthodox Pharisee looked down with contempt. The parents of Jesus themselves probably sat down to dinner without washing their hands according to the Levitic injunctions, and it was a matter of course to him that they did not thereby defile themselves. It must sometimes have been difficult for a carpenter when at work to obey the circumstantial commands of eating his meal in the orthodox fashion. Jesus knew that the law meant purity of heart and not of hands, and he understood that not the food that enters the mouth but the words that come out of the mouth defile the character of a man.

It is the directness of his experiences which conditions his superiority and the breadth of his mind shown in his communion with the pious Jews as well as with the publicans and sinners; and this is not the product of study, and of consideration, but natural instinct, which becomes more and more a conscious opposition to the narrowness of Phariseeism. The gist of his doctrine is contained in the words, "The poor have the Gospel preached to them," and St. Luke says: "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." But his salvation does not consist in urging the severity of Phariseeism, but in preaching the Kingdom of Heaven, which since those who are invited do not come, will be inherited by the crippled, the lame, and the beggars from the street.

THE CRUCIFIXION AND RESURRECTION.

Jesus no doubt exercised a great influence over the sectarian element of Galilee and for a short time also of Jerusalem, but the main fact of his life is his passion on the cross and his death. Without his martyrdom he would never have been hailed as the saviour of mankind. The dogmas of Christianity, and even the doctrine of the atonement by blood, developed in the Gentile world independently of Jesus. The dogmatic and ecclesiastical features of the Church would have become what they are now whether Jesus of Nazareth or some other sage, say Apollonius of Tyana, had be-

come the recognised saviour of the world. But the beauty of Christianity is the humanity of Jesus and the charm of it which at once conquered the hearts of the people for him is his innocent death on the cross. And Jesus's death on the cross must be regarded as a well authenticated fact.

The violent death of Christ had shaken the faith of his disciples and intimidated his followers. While formerly they had made public demonstrations in his honor to receive him at his entry into Jerusalem as the Son of David, they now gathered secretly behind closed doors. Still some were left, and the echo of the beloved Master's words which still lived in their memories comforted them in their tribulation. They bethought themselves of his warnings, in which he had predicted that the Son of Man must suffer before he could attain the glory of the life eternal. Since spiritual manifestations, miracles, and visions of all kinds were no less frequent occurrences among believers in the times of Christ than they are now, it was but a matter of course that he was seen in various places by his disciples. The possibility of such phenomena in the minds of excitable people is beyond the least shadow of a doubt, and a vision is as real to the man who has it as the sight of actual things under ordinary circumstances. But visions are not as definite as actual occurrences, and thus we must expect that our tradition becomes indistinct. Professor Holtzmann characterises the Gospel records on this subject as follows :

"In the scope of the synoptic Gospels there is no event which is told with so many contradictions. The words *οὐκ ἔστιν ὧδε*, 'he is not here' (Matt. xxviii. 6 = Mark xvi., 6 = Luke xxiv., 6), are the sole point on which we find a literal coincidence. Even the words of the resurrected one (as reported in Matt. xxviii. 18, Luke xxiv. 25, 44, Acts i. 7) are by no means compatible, still less the localities. At any rate, the appearances of Jesus at Jerusalem are related in such a way as to exclude the appearances in Galilee, and *vice versa*, for in Matthew (vii. 10) and Mark (vii.) the disciples receive the express command to go to Galilee for the purpose of receiving more revelations from the resurrected Jesus, while in Luke (xxiv. 49) they are not less positively instructed to remain in Jerusalem. And while according to the text of Luke (xxiv. 33-53) the last appearances of Jesus seem to have occurred on the very day of resurrection, the same author (in Acts i. 3) relates them as having happened on the fortieth day after Easter ; and Matthew (xxviii. 16) at least assumes

the time which was necessary for a journey from Jerusalem to the lake of Galilee for the continuation of such manifestations. The Gospel according to Mark, however, which whenever secondary references come into conflict could be resorted to successfully, breaks off with xvi. 8. But while according to Mark the women said nothing to any man they do the very opposite according to Luke xxiv. 9, where they 'told of these things unto the eleven and to all the rest.' According to Luke xxiv. 4 they see two angels, according to Mark xvi. 5 and Matthew xxviii. 5, one angel, who in Matthew xxviii. 2-4 had already attended to the opening of the grave of which the other Gospels know nothing. Not less apparent are the contradictions with reference to the mode in which the continued life of the resurrected is conceived. For, while on the one hand the most palpable evidences are given for the bodily identity of the resurrected with the crucified One, so as to attribute to him the faculty of being felt by touch and a physical way of alimentation (Luke xxiv. 15, 16, 31, 36, 51); other characteristics make him appear, not as a man re-awakened to life, but as a supernatural being (Matt. xxviii. 9, 17) before whom they fall down to worship. He is spoken of as being possessed of a face that even his disciples recognise only by degrees. He appears suddenly and disappears (Luke xxiv. 31, 36, 51). The disciples on one occasion believed they had seen a spirit, and on another they doubt the identity of his person (Matt. xxviii. 17). Upon the whole, the mode of his existence has already attained here the degree of an omnipresence which he appears to have reached in later days when Christ appears from the heavens to Paul near Damascus and to John on Patmos."

The belief in the resurrected Christ begins with the report of the empty grave. The Gospel according to St. Mark concludes as follows (Mark xvi. 1-8):¹

"And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and Salome had brought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.

"And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came into the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

¹ The passage Chap. xvi. 9-20 is a later addition which is not contained in the oldest codex ("Aleph B"). Diction and grammar are different from Mark's style. It appeared first in Latin versions of the New Testament. (See Dr. Edwin A. Abbott's book *The Common Tradition of the Synoptic Gospels*.) New Testament scholars recognise in this questionable passage a compilation from the Gospels of Matthew and Luke and John.

Two manuscripts (called Codex L and the Syriac Philoxeniana, both not before the eighth century) contain another conclusion which is shorter than the addition which has been received in our versions and reads as follows: "All the instructions, however, they (the women) proclaimed at once to the congregation of Peter. After this, Jesus himself dispensed through them from the Orient to the Occident the holy and eternal proclamation of everlasting salvation."

"And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?

"And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away, for it was very great.

"And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long, white garment; and they were affrighted.

"And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified; he is risen; he is not here; behold the place where they laid him.

"But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.

"And they went out quickly and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed; neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid."

In Matthew the account of Christ's resurrection has been considerably added to; and there is a definite tendency reflected in the situation. The chief priests and Pharisees procure a guard from Pilate to watch the grave, "lest the disciples come by night and steal the body." The inference suggests itself here that unbelievers saw nothing strange in the disappearance of a body. We read Chap. xxviii. 1-10:

"In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

"And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

"His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow.

"And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.

"And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

"He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

"And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.

"And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.

"And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.

"Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me."

As the grave is said to have been closed by a big stone and guarded by soldiers, the motive of the women could no longer be to embalm the body, but simply to see the sepulchre; and now Christ's resurrection happens before their eyes. There was a great earthquake; an angel rolled back the stone, and, to heighten the dramatic effect, sat upon it. Christ himself still remains invisible, and the announcement of his resurrection is made as in Mark.

The problem of resurrection reached a new phase when the question arose whether the resurrected Christ was the self-same person or a mere spiritual presence, a demon, or a ghost; and the Church took the first horn of the dilemma. The conviction of the bodily identity of the resurrected Christ with the crucified Jesus who was buried in the sepulchre, resulted in another modification of the report which is preserved in Luke, and now Christ is not only seen, but speaks to the disciples and identifies himself by showing his hands and feet, proclaiming directly that he is no mere spirit but a body of flesh and bones. Christ is now supposed to have a truly material body. He says (Luke xxiv. 39): "A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." This account is still further surpassed in the Gospel of St. John, the latest one among the four canonical Gospels, in which Christ requests Thomas the doubter, saying (John xx. 27):

"Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing."

Further on St. John makes Jesus eat in the presence of the disciples in order to convince them of his bodily resurrection. We read in Chap. xxi. 12-13:

"Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord."

"Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise."

Mankind crave after the material life, they want to preserve their personality, body and all. Hence this increased assurance of Christ's bodily resurrection, and such Gospel manuscripts as regarded Christ a mere spirit were rejected as uncanonical. Even those who believe in the personal resurrection of Christ concede the gradual growth of legendary elements in the various reports which

tend to become more and more materialistic, finally establishing the resuscitation of the dead body with all its bodily wants.

There are four stages in the development of the reports on the resurrection of Jesus. First the resurrected Jesus is merely an object of sight, as in the original statement of the vision of St. Paul, then he addresses his disciples and speaks to them, thus involving the sense of hearing. In the third stage we are told that Jesus was touched and could be felt with the hands. The idea that he may be an immaterial and mere spiritual personality (*δαμόνιον ἀσώματον*) is here directly objected to in the argument that "a spirit, i. e., a ghost or demon (*δαμόνιον*), has not flesh and bones." In order to prove beyond the shadow of dispute the identity of the Crucified and the Resurrected, the narrator insists that the disciples saw and felt the wounds made by the nails. But the climax of materialising the resurrected Jesus is reached when he is represented to eat for mere show, not to appease hunger, but to demonstrate his bodily presence. And all these legendary reports prompted by the doctrine of the bodily resurrection of the early Church have overgrown and cover almost completely the original statement of the empty grave, which seems to be the historical nucleus of the resurrection stories and furnished the first argument of the disciples.

Prof. Paul Schwartzkopff, a Christian and a believer, by no means sceptical, feels compelled to surrender the idea of a bodily resurrection of Jesus for a resuscitation of his spiritual personality. He believes that the body of Jesus was purloined, which is quite possible considering the superstitions of the age connected with the remains of hanged and crucified persons. Schwartzkopff argues that God's providence suffered this for the sake of avoiding worse evils, such as relic worship and other pagan monstrosities. Incidentally, we may add, the absence of the body helped to mature the belief in immortality which passed through several phases and left imprints of their successive stages in the doctrines of the early Church.

There is a little story reported in Luke which in all its incidents is so lifelike that, although it may be of a later date, it possesses a peculiar poetical charm and is more vivid than any one of the

other accounts of the appearances of Jesus after death. It reads as follows (Luke xxiv. 13-35) :

"And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus¹ which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs.

"And they talked together of all these things which happened.

"And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.

"But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

"And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

"And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

"And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people :

"And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.

"But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel : and beside all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done.

"Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre ;

"And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

"And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said : but him they saw not.

"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken :

"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

"And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

"And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went : and he made as though he would have gone further.

"But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us : for it is toward evening and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

"And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.

"And their eyes were opened, and they knew him ; and he vanished out of their sight.

¹ Emmaus, probably the present Kalonije, not Emmaus Nicopolis.

"And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

"And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them.

"Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.

"And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread."

The objective facts of the story of Emmaus, which lie within the sphere of natural possibility, are easily distinguished from the subjective additions. Two disciples meet a stranger who is also a disciple, and while he speaks to them with enthusiasm on the necessity of Christ's suffering before he could enter into his glory, their heart burned within them. The stranger must have heard Jesus preach, for he was not only well versed in the new doctrines, but shared in the habit of blessing and breaking the bread as did all the Nazarenes. The stranger never claimed to be Christ; but when the two disciples saw him no more, they felt assured that no one but Jesus could have spoken to them as did that mysterious stranger. And indeed Christ spoke to them out of the mouth of their companion on the road, whom they had invited as a guest. Whoever the stranger may have been, Christ's words and habits of life lived in him, and by them they recognised instinctively that while the body of Christ was surrendered to the grave, his soul and whole being was still a living presence powerful to lead mankind to a higher conception of a higher morality.

THE CAUSE OF THE SUCCESS OF THE GOSPELS.

Considering the character of the Gospel accounts of the life of Jesus, we come to the conclusion that they contain an historical element, which in the beginning was handed down by tradition, then was committed to writing in the shape of the original text of the older Mark, and lastly was rewritten for certain dogmatic purposes, in order to satisfy the several doctrinary needs of the Church, in the shape of the four canonical Gospels, such as we have them now. It is difficult in the present condition of scientific insight, and with the critical material at hand, to believe the Gospel accounts literally and regard them as unqualifiedly inspired books. The un-

critical spirit of the writers, the looseness and lack of exactness in their method of telling events, their imperturbable credulity, are too obvious to render them reliable witnesses or to permit the Gospels to be counted as historical books. In addition, we ought to consider that the ungrammatical language testifies to the insufficient education of the Gospel writers who gave rather their impressions than the results of real investigations of facts, which thus must be accepted as products of simple-minded piety, rather than historical evidences.

Thus, the Gospels are not scientific evidence. But consider the situation as it was, and we shall not go astray in esteeming them after all as belonging to the most noteworthy and remarkable class of books that have ever been written and worthy of being compared with the greatest works in literature, both philosophical and poetical. They are immediate outpourings of the human heart, weaving round the facts of real events significant fancies, entwining the tree of history like exuberant ivy, concealing to a great extent the solid trunk which gives them their support.

We need not side with those who denounce Christianity on account of the legendary element which it contains, nor with those who naïvely believe in the letter of the legend. There is no need of decrying the authors of those writings as imposters and liars, if they make accounts which in the light of rigorous critique are found to have been added to by their imaginative devotion. It is true that if authors of to-day should be guilty of the same proceedings, they ought to be charged with insincerity; but we must consider the times which were different, and especially the atmosphere of the lowly classes in which Christianity first developed. The minds of these men were not in a condition to distinguish between fact and fancy. It lies in the nature of things that the religion destined to become the universal religion of mankind should have grown from below upward, and not from above downward. Whatever inspirations the lowly and downtrodden masses from whose ranks the members of the early Christian Church recruited themselves may have received from Oriental and Greek philosophy, the germ itself of the new religion must have been in their own hearts,

and thus was necessarily influenced by the spiritual world in which they lived, with its ideal aspirations, but also with all its limitations.

If the religious spirit of the early Christians had proved to be critical and scientific, it would never have taken hold of the imagination of the masses; it would have proved an abortion. Thus, we must understand that the poetry of the Church, even though it showed itself in the uncritical formation of legends, was as essential in the development of Christianity as are blossoms in the spring. The spring blossoms, with their showy petals, attract the eye, and seem to be the most essential thing in the development of the tree; and yet their fate is to fall and leave the less ostentatious but more substantial seed-bulb, which is destined to develop into useful fruit.

The significance of the Christian Gospel, i. e., of the story of Jesus of Nazareth and his martyr-death on the cross, accompanied by the belief of his disciples that he is risen from the dead and manifests himself as a living presence to his followers, becomes apparent when we consider its rapid success.

The Christian Gospels presented themselves at once as the solution of the religious problem of the day. The figure of the Messiah as here represented was upon the whole so sympathetic that the various Gnostic schools and congregations immediately conceived a love for Jesus of Nazareth. To be sure, there were differences of opinion concerning the metaphysics and ethics of the new religion, but there could no longer be any doubt that the prophet of the new Gnosis must be humanly divine, such as was the hero of this wonderful story,—wonderful because realistic, and realistic because its nucleus is a true story from life. And so Jesus of Nazareth was bound to become the center of the Gnostic movement, for all the Gnostics, whatever be their views in ethics and metaphysics, express a passionate love and admiration for the gentle prophet of Galilee. This is most apparent in the *Pistis Sophia*, where we read:

“When, therefore, the Saviour had said these words, the disciples came forward and cried out all together, saying: ‘O Saviour, thou excitest us with exceed-

ing great frenzy because of the transcendent height which thou hast revealed unto us ; and thou exaltest our souls, and they have become paths on which we travel to come unto thee, (280) for they came forth from thee. Now, therefore, because of the transcendent heights which thou hast revealed unto us, our souls have become frenzied, and they travail mightily yearning to go forth from us into the height to the region of thy kingdom."

Simon Magus, although he taught that he himself was God incarnate, felt the fascinating spell of the figure of Jesus and of his simple human divinity.

The life and deeds of Apollonius of Tyana were written down by his disciples, because they had not as yet heard of Jesus of Nazareth. Had they heard of him, they would no longer have regarded Apollonius as the realisation of their religious ideal and would have credited the former rather than the latter with all the miraculous powers of a God made flesh. Even he must be of humble birth, a poor man living with the poor among the poor, such as was Jesus ; he must have set an example in suffering and self-resignation, and above all, his doctrines must not be technical and learned, but popular and direct, always giving the new ethics in pointed sentences which drove home the new truths in their moral aspect and could easily be remembered by the untutored multitudes. Such indeed were the methods of Jesus when he preached. In addition, he was expected to perform miracles to prove his divine mission. Miracles were performed by Simon Magus and by Apollonius of Tyana ; but it appears that their miracles, as they were related by their disciples, were too pretentious and showy ; they probably proved too much, while the more modest miracles of Jesus of Nazareth made a more favorable impression upon the sober-minded and the thoughtful.

CHANGES IN THE EVOLUTION OF CHRISTIANITY.

Jesus had lived among the Jews of Galilee and Judæa as a Nazarene. He had preached in parables and proclaimed the approach of the kingdom of heaven upon earth, by which he probably meant a socialistic brotherhood ; but there is scarcely any doubt that he did not teach any of the dogmas of the later Church. Yet

from the communistic society that was organised under the influence of his extraordinary personality by his disciples in Jerusalem, a movement was carried out into the Gentile world that was destined to become the official religion of the Roman Empire.

Since Alexander the Great, the Jews had spread among the nations of the Roman Empire without surrendering their religion and Jewish customs. They became mediators of the monotheistic idea and helped to prepare the world for the acceptance of Christianity. The translation of the Old Testament into Greek, commonly called the Septuagint, was a condition of the *pleroma*, the fulfilment of the times. Without the Greek Bible we might have had the provincial literature of an Aramaic religion, but no New Testament theology. All Greek sages became greatly interested in Judaism on account of its stern monotheism, and many joined the Jewish faith, without, however, accepting either circumcision or the Mosaic law. They remained mere guests in the synagogues of Israel and a few only became proselytes.

Thus while the Greeks began to expect a religious revelation from the Jews, the Jews of the *diaspora* themselves became acquainted with Greek philosophy. And they were astonished at the purity and precision of Aristotle and the grandeur of Plato. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul so plainly set forth in the *Phædo* made a deep impression on them, and the result was a peculiar literature in which Greek and Jewish thoughts were blended, leading on the one hand to such Apocrypha as the Book of Wisdom and on the other hand to the philosophical conceptions of Philo, who developed the idea of the divine Logos.

The man who undertook the work of giving a definite character to the religious thought that was thus spreading through the Roman Empire, was Saul of Tarsus, a Pharisee, who had bitterly persecuted the Jewish congregations of the disciples of Jesus and played a prominent part in the condemnation and stoning of Stephen, the first martyr of the young Church. The gladness and the spirit of rejoicing with which Stephen died must have powerfully affected the soul of Paul. Against his own will he became convinced that there was a great truth in the new movement, and that

he was wrong to suppress it. But the more his conscience reproved him, the more zealous did he become in his antagonism to the disciples, until, at last, he could bear it no longer. The new conviction that had slowly taken a firm hold upon him in the subconscious regions of his soul flashed upon him in the shape of a vision. With this occurrence Saul, who later on called himself Paul, began a new life; and ever after did he consider his vision as the authorised call to his apostleship and also as an actual and unequivocal evidence of Christ's bodily resurrection from the grave.¹

The passage 1 Cor. xv. 5-8 is important as being the weighty but sole evidence of a direct witness of Christ's resurrection. It speaks of Christ's having been first seen by Cephas, and then by the twelve, afterwards by more than five hundred brethren at once, and by all the brethren at once, and finally James the brother of Jesus, and by all the Apostles, lastly by Paul. The ascension is not mentioned, and Paul's words imply that his vision of Christ was not different in kind from the appearances which the other Apostles had had of their resurrected master.

But while the old Apostles believed in the Messianic mission of Jesus in spite of his execution on the cross, Paul believed on account of it. The passion of Christ and his death² on the cross constituted to him the means of salvation which we can make our own only through faith. He says (1 Cor. i. 23):

"But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness."

And in Gal. vi. 14:

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

¹ It is well known that St. Paul refers to this incident in his Epistles only in a general way, (1 Cor. ix. 1 and xv. 8); and the Acts contain three reports (ix. 4-5, xxii. 6, and xxvi. 12) which in some details do not agree. The event itself, however, must be regarded as an established fact. Paul suffered from an epileptic attack on the road to Damascus, fell to the ground, and had a vision, or, as physicians now-a-days would say, a hallucination. The main thing, however, is that he believed for the rest of his life that he was confronted on this occasion by Jesus himself.

² See O. Pfleiderer, *Das Urchristenthum*, p. 41.

While St. Paul dropped almost all that had been regarded as essential by the leaders of the young Church at Jerusalem, he introduced a new idea which constituted a radical change of the Christ idea. It is natural enough that Paul's theory was not acceptable to the disciples at Jerusalem, so that he had to seek a broader field for his missionary work among the Gentiles. The Apostle found the soil prepared for his doctrines. Although he had to struggle, as was natural enough, against other conceptions of the spirituality of man and the modes of salvation, he found everywhere congregations of disciples who held similar views and could thus easily gain followers who were attracted by the systematic presentation of his views, by the conviction of his enthusiasm, and the sober spirit in which he applied them to the moral problems of actual life. We shall better appreciate him if we compare his views with the extravagances of magicians like Simon (Acts, Chap. viii), with prophets who talked in the style of Hermes Trismegistos, with Gnostics such as the author of the *Pistis Sophia*, etc. There may have been some among them who had still purer and nobler conceptions of believing in a universal manifestation of the Logos or spirit of God among all nations. When men of this latter type joined the young Church they rejected the belief in the doctrine of a bodily resurrection and were inclined to an allegorical interpretation. It is probably this view which St. Paul criticises when speaking of those who deny the resurrection of Christ. (1 Cor., Chap. xv.) The fantastical theories of Gnosticism were unfit to survive on account of the crudities and superstitions of their views, while the purer conceptions of a spiritual immortality did not find favor with the sensual masses who wanted a belief adapted to their materialistic constitutions. Perhaps the representatives of these doctrines were too aristocratic and cold, keeping aloof from and even looking with contempt upon the vulgar and the ignorant as unfit to comprehend the truth. The Judaising elements among these aspirations were very strong, but since they had no root in the hearts of the Gentiles we can readily see that in the universal struggle for survival there was for them no chance of success. The Christianity of St. Paul was, among all the religious theories that were advanced in

the first century of our era, the only one that was adapted to the needs of the people at large, and the more new documents are brought to light, the better we understand that in the long run his preaching alone could survive.

Christianity changed when the Apostle St. Paul transferred it from Jerusalem to Greece. The Christians at Jerusalem never looked upon the Gentile Christians as their equals, but they regarded them as followers of Jesus, although only of a second degree.

The question arises : Was the Pauline religion still Christianity,—the Christianity of Jesus? Is it not misleading that the same name should apply to the communistic idealists of the Jerusalemic Church as to the more cultured but less socialistic Gentiles? Many of Christ's injunctions were no longer interpreted literally, and instead of abandoning the world, the Pauline Christian lived in the world as though he enjoyed it not ; he no longer gave up his property but used his possessions as though he owned them not. His aspiration was to be free from egotism and lust ; but he no longer offered his left cheek to him who smote him on his right cheek ; he was ready to defend his person and honor, but he deemed it his duty to struggle, not for the satisfaction of personal vanity, but to uphold justice. He stood up for his rights, not because it was *his* cause, but because he trusted that his cause was right. In this way the Gentile Church poured new wine into old bottles and transformed the original ideal of Christianity. Riches were in themselves no longer deemed to be a hindrance to a godly life ; there was no need of giving them up, but the rich were requested not to boast of their wealth ; covetousness, miserly conduct, and hard-heartedness were upbraided, and charity was recommended. We read in the first Epistle of St. John (iii. 17):

"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him ? "

From an impartial standpoint we can now readily see that this transformation made Christianity possible. Paul's Christianity originated from a desire to apply the Christian ideal to practical life,

and the changes wrought by these aspirations rendered it fit to preserve its existence. The primitive Christianity of the Church at Jerusalem went to the wall, but the Christian spirit was preserved and served as a leaven to leaven the lump of all the nationalities of Europe.

The question whether we have a right to call the Pauline religion and the older Jewish Christianity by the same name is about as legitimate as the question whether Tom Smith who is now a boy should still retain the name which was given to him when he was a baby. He has changed so radically that his own mother would not recognise him, if she had not witnessed all the changes of his development herself. The question, therefore, is to be answered in the affirmative. All religions and political institutions have a right to their original names so long as the historical connexion is preserved or re-established, and so long as their representatives feel that the spirit of the original movement is still living in them in one form or another.

Names are in themselves mere sounds. The main thing is what is meant by a name, and that is more a matter of subjective definition and arbitrary determination than of logical argument or objective demonstration.

Christianity changed again when transferred to Rome, and when it became the established and official religion of the Empire. The change was not for the better. Yet it remained Christianity, preserving still some of the nobility and charitable love of its founder.

When Christianity was transferred to the liberty-loving Barbarians of the North, it again entered into a new phase which raised it considerably above the creed of the authority-worshipping Romans. The difference between these two forms of Christianity remained long hidden until a crisis appeared in the time of the Reformation which led to the schism between Roman Catholics and Protestants. Luther and the other reformers imagined that they resorted to the old ideals of Christianity, and they did, so far as they understood it. As a matter of fact, they were not reformers, but builders of a new Christianity which was better adapted to the

needs of the progressive Teutons and Saxons than Romanised Christianity which had never taken root in German and English soil.

But the Reformation is not as yet the end of the world's religious history. Various Christian sects have been transplanted to American soil and are thriving. But he must be a superficial observer of the human heart who imagines that American Christianity is the same as its European mother. Even the most conservative Churches, the Episcopalians and the Roman Catholics, are very different from their brethren in the Old Country. The fact is undeniable that a new form of Christianity is preparing itself in our very midst. Our Church people do not notice it simply because the change is an adaptation to the changes in their surroundings. Thus we do not notice that the train moves if it but move gently, unless we look out of the window.

The Parliament of Religion is a new phase, the importance of which cannot be overestimated. There are voices of warning who would fain bid the progress of the world to halt, because they imagine that it is the way to perdition. But let us not be intimidated; the world is moving still, and so long as we can trust in the divinity of truth and the holiness of love, we need not shrink from advancing in whatever direction they may lead us. If the old religion of our fathers will no longer remain in the letter of their dogmas as it was, it need not concern us; let us rest assured that if it changes by becoming truer, it will change for the better.

EDITOR.